



COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Westminster Police Department

Andrew E. Hall, Chief of Police

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Words from Chief Hall – “Quality Policing”

In 2003, the Westminster Police Department implemented several strategies to assess and ensure the quality of police service provided to our community. One such strategy is the “Supervisor Follow-up Card.” It is completed by a police supervisor (Sergeant) who contacts randomly selected citizens who have had contact with a patrol officer. The citizen may be a victim, witness, or even a suspect. The Sergeant asks about various aspects of the contact and forwards a “Supervisor Follow-up Card” to his/her manager (Lieutenant). The Manager reviews these cards and also randomly checks on the citizens whose names are listed on the cards.



Chief Andy Hall

We have received interesting and useful insight from this process. We have used the comments to better focus our efforts, identify training issues and, most frequently, to commend our officers. Some of the comments we have received were quite positive:

“... [the officer] was awesome. In fact, I’ve had three very good contacts with your officers on prior occasions.”

“... [the officer] seemed real concerned for us. I liked that.”

“... very helpful, professional, and courteous...”

Other comments were less enthusiastic:

“... nice and professional, but hoped he could have explained more...”

And some comments were surprisingly honest:

“He is doing a good (job) for getting people like me off the street.”

We will continue to use “Supervisor Follow-up Cards” and other strategies to maintain the high level of service you rightfully expect from us. I am very proud of the men and women of the Westminster Police Department and their commitment to quality policing; they are among the very best in the business.

Please enjoy this edition of the *Community Briefing* and learn more about the Department, its programs and people. As always, I welcome your thoughts and comments on any matter, at any time. Please write to admin@ewpd.org.

WESTMINSTER EXPLORER POST

Since 1972, the Westminster Explorer Post has provided teen-aged youth with the opportunity to learn about police work while providing invaluable services to the community. Explorers volunteer at least 15 hours per month to assist with various police functions (i.e., pedestrian and traffic control) at community events such as the Blessed Sacrament Festival, Westminster High School graduation, Mayors Ball, and the Fourth of July fireworks show.

In July, our explorers competed in the Western Regional Explorer Competition in Las Vegas against over 500 explorers representing 11 different states. They have worked very hard to prepare for the events and narrowly



From top to bottom, left to right:
Officer Al Brackett, Officer Jim Bodine, Sergeant Tom Broder-son, Asad Asadulla, Gladys Gallardo, Mavel Botello, Kristen Arreola, Nelly Solorazano, Rachel Myers, Joe Lordanich, Scott Gump, and Tony Vo.

missed placing first overall for the entire competition. However, we are proud to announce that our explorers won three first-place trophies! They were winners in the events of Traffic Accident Investigation, Crime Scene Investigation, and Field Interview. The trophies are proudly being displayed at the front counter of the police department. **Also, the Explorers will be publicly recognized by the City Council on September 8, 2004, at 7:00pm, in the Council Chamber.**

INTERESTING FACT! Several officers working for the Department today began their careers as Explorers!

Guided by four Explorer Advisors, the Explorer Post meets on the first and third Wednesday of every month. During these meetings, the Explorers learn about different aspects of law enforcement and sign up for events. If you have any questions regarding the Explorer Program, please contact Sergeant Broderson at 714-898-3315, ext. 311, or thomasb@epwd.org, and Officer Brackett at 714-898-3315, ext. 860.

Special Note: Explorers Gladys Gallardo and Dudley Ward were recently presented with the Golden Award for community service. This is the highest award an Explorer can receive. Congratulations to both!



Did You Know?

MINI-MOTORCYCLES [POCKET BIKES]



A mini-motorcycle [or pocket bike] is subject to rules and regulations set forth by the California Vehicle Code (CVC). Specifically:

- A gasoline-powered mini-motorcycle [or pocket bike] is subject to all vehicle equipment, registration, driver's license (M1 motorcycle endorsement), and helmet requirements.
- An electric-powered mini-motorcycle [or pocket bike] is subject to all vehicle equipment, driver license (M2 endorsement) and helmet requirements.

The Westminster Police Department, California Highway Patrol, and various Orange and Los Angeles County agencies treat these mini-motorcycles [or pocket bike] as motorcycles. This means that drivers of these machines are subject to all of the rules of the road.

What is the bottom line?

Mini-motorcycles [or pocket bikes] are not designed or permitted to be driven on public roadways. They should be driven at appropriate race tracks. Also, a valid driver's license is required to operate them. Although the Department is focusing on educating the public on this issue, violators can be issued citations (i.e., driving without a license or driving without a helmet) and the mini-motorcycles [or pocket bikes] can be impounded.

REMEMBER: Be safe and always wear your helmet!

Back to School Safety Awareness Tips

As the summer closes to an end and the school session draws near, both parents and students should keep in mind these helpful safety tips:

- If you take the bus to school, arrive at the bus stop early and always stand 4 giant steps back from the curb.



- When lining up at the bus stop, make your line away from the street.
- NEVER walk behind the bus.
- If you walk to school, take a safe route such as one with the fewest street crossings. Use intersections with crossing guards. And stay away from parks, vacant lots, fields, and other isolated places.
- Whenever possible, walk to and from school with a friend, neighbor, brother, or sister.



- If you bike or skate to school, be sure to wear a helmet. And do not forget to lock up your bike with a sturdy lock.
- NEVER talk to strangers.
- If you see anyone doing something that makes you uneasy or you think is not right, tell your parents, a teacher, or another trusted adult.

The Westminster Police Department and the McGruff Organization have provided these tips for you and your safety. For more information, please call 714-898-3315 or visit the McGruff Safety website at <http://www.mcgruff.org>.



Good Observation!

Detective Cameron Knauerhaze

While driving in an unmarked police car, Detective Knauerhaze observed a male driver engaging in inappropriate conversation with two female youths who were walking on the street.



Det. Knauerhaze

Fearing for their safety, Detective Knauerhaze decided to stop the driver and identify himself as a police officer. The man tried to drive away, but he was pulled over by marked police units. Upon investigation, it was determined that a child annoyance crime had occurred, and the man was arrested. Using his instinct

and police training, Detective Knauerhaze was able to protect the youths and prevent them from harm. Good job!

Medal of Commendation for Students

Created by the Westminster Police Department, Westminster Police Officers Association, and the Westminster School District, Medals of Commendation are awarded annually to students who exemplify excellent citizenship throughout the school year. Teachers and staff of each elementary school select the winning students and submit their names to the school district and police department.

Last school year, a total of 32 students from 16 different schools were honored for their hard work and positive spirit.



If you want to learn more about the *Medal of Commendation* program, please contact Sergeant Bill Collins at 714-898-3315, ext. 408 or billc@ewpd.org.

Crime Prevention Tip from WPD

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES “Distraction Burglary”



“Distraction burglaries” occur when suspects distract a victim from his or her home in order to have another person enter the residence and steal property.

Suspects often target homes of elderly female victims, stating that they have lost a child’s ball or kitten in the backyard. The suspects

then ask for assistance in finding the lost item. As the victim looks for the item, one of the suspects or an unseen accomplice enters the residence and takes the victim’s purse and/or jewelry.

The suspects have been described as Male White/Hispanics with Female White/Hispanics companions. At times, children may also be present with the suspects.



Other Male White/Hispanic suspects use a similar tactic to distract their victims. They told the victims that they worked for the City and needed to trim the tree in the backyard. The suspects would ask the victims to follow them into the backyard while another unseen suspect would enter the residence and steal property.



Be aware of these distraction burglaries, and call the Police Department immediately if you are approached by these suspects.

On the Witness Stand



Sgt. Tom Finley

Sergeant Tom Finley recently testified at a 1996 murder case trial in which he was the lead detective.

In 1997, a detailed and thorough investigation led to the quick arrest of three suspects in connection to the shooting deaths of two youth. Two of these suspects had subsequently pled guilty and each received a 6-year sentence. The remaining suspect (the shooter) hired a well-known defense attorney to represent him in court. The 6-week trial took place in June 2004.



Sergeant Finley was well-prepared to testify when called as a witness. Relying on his police training, investigative expertise, and extensive investigation notes, Sergeant Finley was able to provide credible testimony and strong case evidence to the jury.

Ultimately, the jury found the suspect guilty of two counts of first degree murder with special circumstances. Great work, Tom!

Safety Day Police Participation



Organized by the City’s Community Service Department, *Safety Day* took place on July 27, 2004. Staff from the Police Department was on hand to pass out public safety information, assist with bicycle registration, answer questions, and interact with the public. One of the annual event’s highlight was a SWAT demonstration.

OFFICER TRAINING: Family/Domestic Violence

Family/Domestic Violence is a serious crime and the Westminster Police Department will actively investigate and work with the Orange County District Attorney’s office to prosecute all offenders. Using funds from an U.S. Department of Justice grant, we have provided a 2-day training on the subject of domestic violence to all police officers and police dispatchers. Over 20 select first responders and detectives have also attended additional, in-depth courses on the subject.



OFFICER TRAINING: Emergency Response to Terrorism Incidents

All Westminster Police Department officers are attending ongoing training to learn about the proper procedure and protocol for

“Emergency Response to Terrorism Incidents.”



Using Department of Homeland Security grant funds, organizers of this training will educate first responders from all local law enforcement and public safety agencies on how to safely and effectively deal with any suspected and/or real terrorism incidents in Orange County.

Protecting Our Children



The Westminster Police Officers Association (WPOA) recently purchased computer software programs, designed to prevent children from accessing inappropriate websites on the Internet, for all the computers at the Boys & Girls Club. The WPOA's generous donation ensures that hundreds of children that use those computers are now protected from harmful material found in cyberspace!

Police Department Division News

Crimes Against Public Unit

Traditionally, police detectives and staff were assigned to separate offices (i.e., Narcotics, Gangs, and Computer Forensics Lab) that dealt with different types of crime. In order to increase efficiency and streamline communication, several of these offices merged together and became the *Crimes Against Public Unit*.

The *Crimes Against Public Unit* has the combined responsibilities of narcotics, vice, counterfeiting, and organized crime enforcement. Headed by Sergeant Tom Finley, police detectives and civilian staff work closely with representatives from outside agencies such as the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Case Example. Unit members have worked very well together. Below is an example of their collaborative effort:

Armed with a search warrant, unit members conducted a thorough narcotics investigation that resulted in the arrest of eight suspected drug dealers. Police interrupted their drug operation that had spanned through the cities of Westminster, Stanton, and Anaheim. Over one pound of methamphetamine, one-half-pound of marijuana, and \$25,000 in cash were seized by the police.

Communications Division/Dispatch



The Communications Division is the hub of contact between the public and the police. Dispatchers make critical decisions in the early seconds of each call to determine what instructions callers should receive and how police officers should respond. Police Dispatchers answer and prioritize 9-1-1 calls, emergency and business lines, monitor numerous police radio channels and dispatch officers and equipment as required.

Did you know? The Communications Division handles over 140,000 telephone calls and 22,000 emergency 9-1-1 calls per year!



A Day in the Life as a Dispatcher

Imagine starting your day as a Communications Dispatcher with the Westminster Police Department. You come in at 6:30 p.m. to start your shift and sit at the dispatch console. Your first call is a traffic accident with injuries. The next call is an upset homeowner reporting her house broken into while she was away. Another caller is despondent over the break up of his marriage and contemplating suicide. You then receive a call from a frantic liquor store clerk reporting he was just robbed at gunpoint and shots were fired inside the store. A responding officer locates the suspect vehicle and goes into pursuit. During all of this activity the phones keep ringing while officers are making car stops, running license plates, warrant checks, and requesting paramedics and tow trucks.

Teamwork and the ability to multitask are vital to effectively handling this fast paced career. Besides, how often do you get a chance to tell a cop where to go?

If you or someone you know are up for the challenge and are interested in becoming a police dispatcher, please contact the City's Personnel Department at 714-898-3311, ext. 226.

Animal Control Unit

Westminster Police Department is one of the few police departments in Orange County to have its own animal control officers. Animal Control officers enforce state laws and municipal codes concerning animals, manage all complaints related to animals, and assist police officers in resolving a variety of problems involving animals. All matters involving live animals have top priority and every effort

will be made to keep lost pets safe and to return them to their owners.

Did you know? Each year, an average of 1,000 Westminster dogs and cats are impounded.



If you suspect an animal is being mistreated, please contact the police department immediately. We care about the animals in our City. To speak to our Animal Control officers via telephone, please call 714-898-3315, ext. 365.

"Relay for Life" Cancer Walk July 30-31, 2004

Organized by Officer Al Brackett, the Department participated in the annual "Relay for Life" Cancer Walk sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

While many staff members put on their running/walking shoes, others opened up their wallets and donated generously. Funds were raised for supporting cancer research. For learn more about "Relay for Life," check out their website at: http://www.cancer.org/docroot/GI/gi_1.asp.



"Above and Beyond" the Call of Duty

**Officer Kevin MacCormick
Detective Cliff Williams**



While off-duty in their neighborhood, Officer Kevin MacCormick and Detective Cliff Williams heard noises that sounded like a car accident. Without hesitation, they ran to the accident location and began to provide assistance.



Detective Williams Officer MacCormick

The victim was seriously hurt, and the car was beginning to catch on fire. Immediately, they carried the victim to safety and started CPR. Shortly afterwards, the Orange County Fire Authority arrived at the scene and took over medical treatment of the victim. Both Officer MacCormick and Detective Williams are commended for their heroic acts!

Steve Phillips Memorial Bike Ride



About 100 motorcycle enthusiasts gathered at the Police Department on July 24, 2004 to participate in the Steve Phillips Memorial Bike Ride. They rode through local streets and freeways, and finished off the day's event at a Chili Cook-Off in Cypress. Donations were accepted and contributed to the Westminster Police Officer Association Memorial Fund.

New Faces at WPD

Officers-in-Training



Officers Ramirez & Jaipream
at their swearing-in ceremony

On June 7, 2004, Officers David Ramirez and Benjamin Jaipream became the newest members of the Westminster Police Department.

Officer Jaipream is from Buena Park, and he joined the Department after graduating from the Rio Hondo Police Academy. Fluent in Thai, Officer Jaipream is one of our bilingual officers. He is currently assigned to the Patrol Unit.

Officer Ramirez, also a bilingual speaker (Spanish), is from El Monte. He graduated from the Rio Hondo Police Academy and is currently in the Patrol Unit as well.

Records Clerk

After working at the Police Department for six years as an Intern, Kellee Wells joins us now as a full-time civilian staff member. Her official swearing-in ceremony took place on July 29, 2004. She is assigned to the Records Bureau. Welcome aboard, Kellee!



Records Clerk Kellee Wells and Chief Hall at her swearing-in ceremony

Police Dispatcher

Tricia Quast starts as a full-time Police Dispatcher on August 8, 2004. Coming from a family with law enforcement background, Tricia began her career in the field as a records clerk and continues as a dispatcher. For the past three years, she has been working at Westminster as a part-time dispatcher. She is a great addition to the Department. Welcome, Tricia!



Police Dispatcher Tricia Quast



Ask Your Questions

jackd@ewpd.org

(714) 898-3315
extension 723

Question: *"I have seen more and more people talking on their cell-phones while driving.*

Does cell-phone use make driving much more dangerous?



Does it cause the most accidents?"

Answer: Contrary to popular belief, cellular phone usage alone is not the number one cause of traffic accidents. However, using a phone while driving is considered to be a form of 'distracted driving,' which is dangerous and plays a significant role in traffic accidents.

Distracted Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducts and sponsors annual surveys to collect data on the frequent causes for traffic collisions on our highways. Sponsored by NHTSA, Gallop Organization (2003) reported their survey findings on distracted and drowsy driving. Specifically, they found that most drivers at least occasionally engage in the following behaviors that draw their attention away from their driving tasks:

- "talking with other passengers" at 81%
- "changing radio stations or CDs" at 66%
- "eating or drinking while driving" at 49%
- "uses a cell phone when driving" at 30%
- "dealing with children in the backseat" at 24%
- "personal grooming" at 8 %

When asked, about 14% of drivers involved in a crash in the past 5 years attributed the crash to *distracted driving*. Some specific causes include:

- "distracted by looking for something outside the vehicle (i.e., building or street sign)" at 23%
- "dealing with a child or another passenger" at 19%
- "looking for something inside the vehicle" at 14%
- "distracted by another driver" at 11%

You can read the complete report on the Gallop survey findings at: http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/drowsy_driving1/survey-distractive03/index.htm.

Here are a few tips to keep you performing at your peak:

1. Be familiar with your vehicle and its equipment.
2. Be able to adjust controls without taking your eyes off of the road.
3. Keep your eyes on the road when talking to your passengers or children.
4. Use a hands-free cellular telephone while driving if at all possible.
5. Pull over to eat or drink.

Most important of all, drive defensively. Be alert for other distracted drivers who share the roads with you!

Police Department Phone Numbers

**If you have an emergency,
call 9-1-1!**



**For non-emergency
or other business,
call (714) 898-3315**

General Information	ext. 425
Dispatch	ext. 326
Records Bureau	ext. 371
Traffic Division	ext. 339
Administration	ext. 301

E-mail List

If you are not on our Community Briefing e-mail list and would like to be, please let us know by sending your name and e-mail address to

admin@ewpd.org



All of us at the Westminster Police Department would like to extend a warm welcome to our new City Manager, Vangie Schock. Her support for law enforcement and public safety is greatly appreciated!



**Mayor Margie L. Rice
Mayor Pro-Tem Andy Quach
Councilman Kermit Marsh
Councilman Frank Fry
Councilman Russell Paris**

We want to express our sincere appreciation to the Westminster City Council for their support and commitment to public safety!

Community Briefing is a newsletter produced quarterly by the Westminster Police Department. Its main purpose is to share information about the Department with the community we serve.

Further questions or comments regarding the contents of this newsletter should be forwarded to the Research & Planning Unit at (714) 898-3315 ext. 460 or admin@ewpd.org.